(c) The public sector banks are taking concerted steps to increase their profitability by rationalizing their branch network, abolition of zonal offices, reduction of NPAs, lowering costs of deposits, increasing productivity etc.

Transfer of Assets by M/s. Seagram

1005. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:
SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "DRI wants transfer of Seagram assets stopped" which appeared in the Economic Times, New Delhi dated the 21st June, 2001;

(b) if so, what are the details of transfer of assets by Seagram to other companies;

(c) whether it is a fact that Seagram is misdeclaring and under-valuing bulk scotch concentrates and evading custom duties for the last many years; and

(d) if so, what are the details of evasion of custom duties by Seagram as on 30th June, 2001 and action proposed to be taken by Government for recovery of customs duty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Investigations conducted by the DRI has revealed that M/s. Seagram Manufacturing Ltd. have evaded customs duty to the tune of Rs. 37.96 crores by way of misdeclaration of value, quantity and classification of scotch whiskey concentrate imported goods during the period from 1994-95 upto June, 2000. A show cause notice demanding the said customs duty amounting to Rs. 37.96 crores has already been issued by DRI on 19.12.2000. Further, a prosecution complaint under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962 has also been launched against M/s. Seagram Manufacturing Ltd. and its officials. Another show cause notice for alleged duty evasion of Rs. 12 crores for the period from July, 2000 to June, 2001 is in the process of being issued to the party. Department of Food Processing

Industry, Ministry of Agriculture has been informed of the above investigations to prevent transfer of assets of M/s. Seagram to other companies.

Use of Idle Funds by Government

1006. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI:
SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:
SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Ministries told to use Rs. 5,000 crore idle funds" which appeared in the Economic Times, New Delhi on 29th June, 2001; and

(b) if so, what are the details of idle funds and what are the details of these funds to be used by the various Ministries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Government is aware of the news-item appearing in the Economic Times dated 29.6.2001;

(b) The reference in the news report is to the Plan outlays of various Ministries like Road Transport & Highways, Steel, Civil Aviation, Agriculture, Railways and Rural Development. As indicated in the Budget documents for 2001-2002 presented to Parliament, the Plan outlays of these Ministries are as follows:

(Rs. Crore)

Ministry	Outlay		Total
	Budget Support	I.E.B.R.	
1	2	3	4
Agriculture	3009	—	3009
Civil Aviation	63	1578	1641
Railways	3540	6500	10040